

## **PH Book launch 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024 at 49 Staffordshire Street - EC speaking notes**

### **Start**

- Journey to this moment started 2011
- Benny & I had been working together in the Rye Lane & Station Action Group and in Peckham Vision since 2005 in the campaigns for the station to get it listed, to restore the Old Waiting Room and to restore the square in front of the station, as well as to help save the Bussey Building and Copeland Park across Rye Lane from destruction.
- Benny told me about the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) scheme.
- I felt that we had something really precious in Peckham Town Centre (TC) that matched the THI.
- Embedded throughout the TC there are buildings from the last 300 years.
- It's a Living Museum.
- Benny and I took the Heritage Lottery Fund officer on a walkabout and showed her and she told us that if the council submitted a proposal with our support they would consider it.
- In just a few weeks we mobilised local heritage enthusiasts and we brought together the info the council needed about all the town centre buildings for the submission to get through the first stage. Finally, in 2014 it got through all the hoops. Through that we brought into Peckham over £2m from HLF and about £1/2m from the Council.
- The PHRP (Peckham Heritage Regeneration Partnership) has been a key part of the THI community programme started in 2016 with the perfect independent chair in Claire Hegarty.
- I worked with the Council consultant to write the PHRP and the Community Programme into the THI proposal. We included a project with local schools which was so successful. We want all children at school in SE15 to learn about their heritage.
- The PHRP brought together the Council and the community in a working partnership. Special thanks to Cleo as the local councillor. Showing real collaboration can work!

### **Team**

- For several years now a number of us have developed in the PHRP into a strong team of local heritage enthusiasts.

- We have just had a wonderful success this week in saving #104 Peckham High St, an early C18<sup>th</sup> building, with the news that the Council has refused the application to demolish it.
- There were over a hundred local people able to write informed objections to the Council.
- Derek has been part of the team from the beginning and the PHRP has provided the context and the support for the book which several of us have contributed to in its long years of creation and production.

## Future

- That brings us to now with the launch today of the book, which is a very fitting tribute to the work of the PHRP.
- It is also the launch of Peckham Heritage with its strong team of Peckham heritage enthusiasts which has grown through working together in the PHRP.
- Peckham Heritage is building on the work of Peckham Vision over nearly 20 years now in mobilising and informing thousands of local people about Peckham's heritage.
- That remains Peckham Vision's prime focus – how to bring us all together to value and enjoy our local heritage as part of our present and future, and show how that is a key part of living well now and not just about the past.
- Because, as we have shown over the last 20 years, working together we can really make a difference to the way the town centre evolves.
- We are all keen to develop a deeper and wider understanding of local heritage and also how that relates to the different heritages people living here today bring as well.

Thanks to Derek for having the enthusiasm to write up all the stories of Peckham buildings and bringing in Benny to write up the architectural notes, and to Claire for her skills and patience in bringing it all together at last, and to all those of us in the PH team on the launch of the book and the launch of Peckham Heritage.

Eileen Conn

1<sup>st</sup> March 2024